

GEIDAM

796 though it was admitted that there were Kanuri who drank water
785 in secret. In Maiduguri there are Kanuri who eat openly in
183 the market-place during Ramadan, but Geidam is too small a town
[369] for anyone to violate religious custom so blatantly. As Rama-
785 dan in 1957 fell in the hottest and most uncomfortable time of
512 the year, fasting, and in particular abstaining from drinking,
is very demanding. Most people radically alter their schedules.
During Ramadan they customarily rise at 3 A.M. at the call of
a waker, pray and drink something and then remain up doing
their work until sunrise (6 A.M.). They then work for an ad-
ditional two or three hours until the sun is high in the sky,
when they retire to sleep until three or four in the afternoon.
[462] From four until sunset (6:45 P.M.) people again work, and the
women pound and grind millet. At sunset the Ladan calls to an-
[262] nounce the end of the day's fast. People then drink quantities
• [272] of a porridge made of millet and soured milk (bolam). At ten
or eleven in the evening people eat the one hearty meal of the
[517] day. Activities such as visiting, chatting and strolling con-
tinue on into the night. During Ramadan, the entire daily
schedule is shifted so that people sleep through the hottest
hours of the day, work during the cooler periods at sunrise and
at sunset, break the fast with a light meal which is followed
by a heavy meal some hours later, and spend much of the night
in leisure activities. In actual fact little work is accomplished
in this month.

785 As the sun set on Tuesday, April 30th, everyone looked
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796 spears in salute to him. The crowd then dispersed and people
[574] dressed in fine robes visited one another and exchanged greetings. Later that evening horsemen rode once again in salute on the dandal; this time the kabuna were joined by a number of townspeople.

796 On the second day of Ngumari Ashembe an enormous feast, attended by about three hundred people, was held at the Ajari at eight in the morning. Some two hundred and fifty people were
[574] seated in the outermost courtyard of the Ajari. These included the kabuna, the more important of the Koranic Malams of the town, and a number of the important traders, many of the latter Hausa. In an inner chamber were the thirty-one members of the NA staff. At one end of the inner chamber, on a raised section sat the Ajia along with the Alkali, the Chief Scribe, the Treasurer, a representative of the Shehu, and Malam Jalo. After a time, the group in the inner chamber made up of the NA staff moved to an inner courtyard, split up into six smaller groups,
[262] and food was brought out. In the inner courtyard pancakes (senasen) were served, followed by rice bari (porridge), whole roast chickens, and large sections of ram roasted in a hole in

• [272] the earth. Orange squash was drunk with the meal itself. After
[302] the meal, kola nuts were distributed, and after all had washed, [576] perfume was passed around. Lastly, prayers were said, and all rose, said "Allah nguba ro" (literally meaning, "May Allah prolong your days"--the traditional phrase of deference said to

[431] men of higher status) to Yerima, and left. Throughout this time,

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796 bowls of food were sent out to the large group of men gathered
574 in the outermost courtyard, and eighty additional bowls, each
431 sufficient to feed four or five people, were distributed to families in the town. In all, 108 bowls of *beri*, each costing about 2 shillings, were given away by the Ajia. Mass distribution of food in this manner is done three times each year, at Ngumori Ashembe, at Ngumori Layabe, and at Mamaludu Kuguibe. In a small town which has no Ajia, the Lowan distributes food to all the families of the town. In Geidam only the Ajia distributes food in this manner, although the Alkali also gives away a great deal on a smaller scale. In Maiduguri the Shehu and the Waziri both distribute great quantities of food, while the Ajia of Maiduguri does not.

796 That evening about thirty-five people were invited to a
574 second feast at the house of Alkali Baba Kura. The meal itself
• [212] was essentially the same as that at the Ajia's, except that Krola (a Nigerian imitation of Coca-Cola) was served instead of Orange squash and clear mints were passed around with the kola
796 nuts. Though the feast itself was traditional in every respect,
574 the manner of invitation was not. A list, headed by the writer
554 (referred to locally as Malam Ibrahim), was sent to all who were invited to attend. The group was made up largely of the NA Malams, the two Kanuri Lowans and the two most important ka-
[264] duna, one Kanuri and two Hausa traders, and a few others. Not present were Yerima Mustapha, who is too important a man to eat at another's house, any of the Limans or important Koranic Malams, the Hausa Lowan or the deposed Lowan Kagu, any craft heads,

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276 this expenditure from both their own productive activities as well as
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511 the husband's allowance. Pagan millet beer, distilled millet liquor,
273 and European beer and spirits are widely consumed. Except for the
[511] District Head, who averaged £3.0.0 to £5.0.0 per month for liquor,
little is known of this expenditure. It appears that it is a more wide-
spread practice in larger centres and among the younger generation of
Kanuri. Indeed it is rare to see an elderly person taking liquor in the
276 pagan quarter of Magumeri. Other minor stimulants are cigarettes, chew-
272 ing tobacco, tamarind juice, soft drinks and candies.

751 A different variety of stimulant, which involves almost
789 everyone in some expenditure, is a supernatural or medicinal one, in
which the individual expects to be protected against malevolence and
[432] misfortune, and to achieve sexual, political and economic success. This
type of stimulant comes traditionally from the native doctor or the
specialized charm seller, each of whom sells items which stimulate great-
er success, or stave off failure along some dimension of aspiration.
789 In the culture contact situation, this has created a good market for
177 "patent medicines" which are beginning to appear in large quantities in
the urban centre. Thus at Maiduguri, a European drug store sports such
items as "Pregno" for pregnant women, "Braino" for students, "Backo"
for anyone with back-aches, "Power" for anyone wishing to increase his
personal fortunes, and so on. The recognized superiority of Western
technology is generalized to its medicinal stimulants and these meet a
sharp demand.

302 Cosmetics in Borno are used by both sexes although more time,
money and effort is spent in self-beautification by women. Both men and
women use perfume, although only at the upper class level is it a daily
practice. Perfume is always passed around at major ceremonies to both